OTONARI COMPLEX
Chapter 22: "It's up to you."
STORY AND ART BY:
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AMPLIFIED
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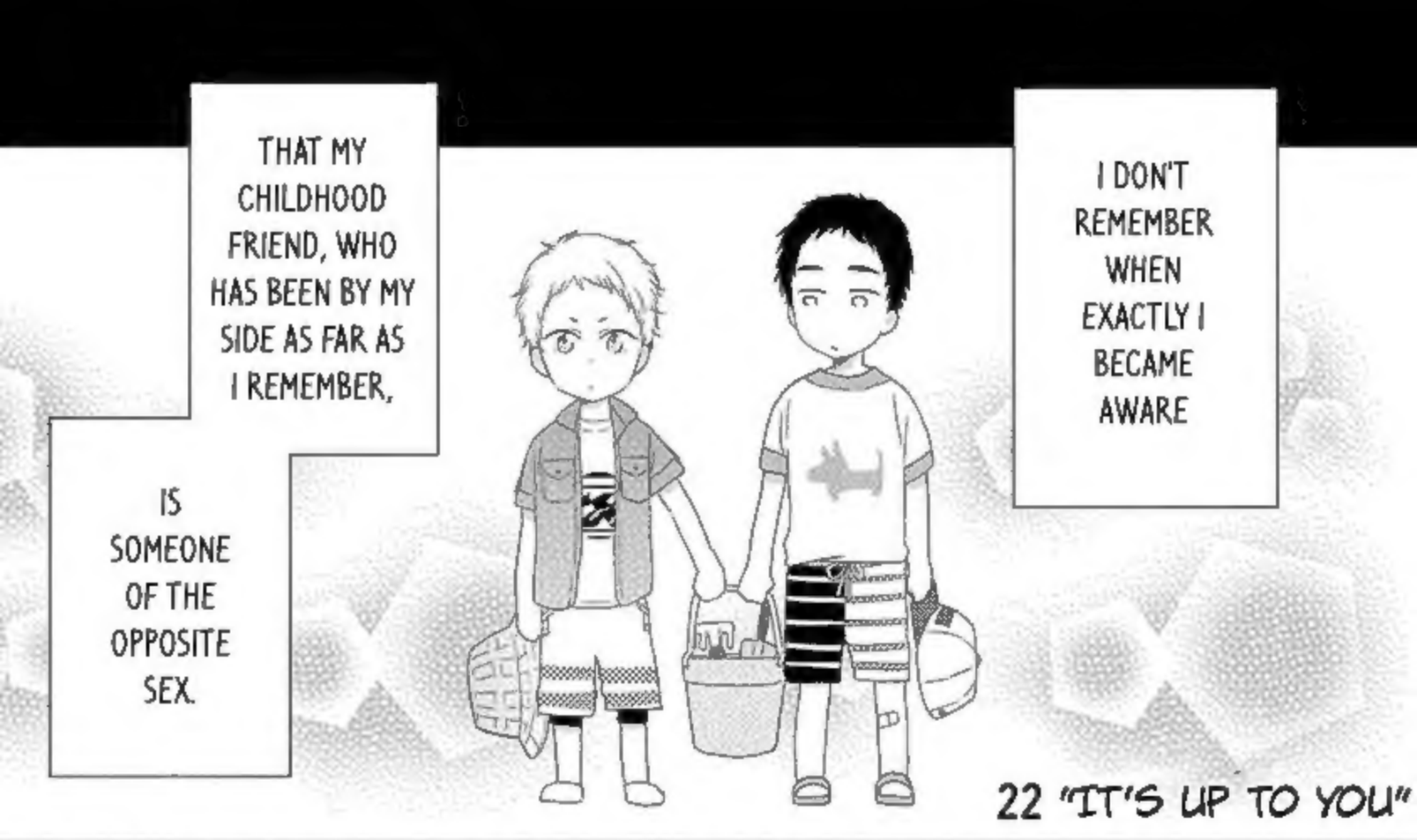
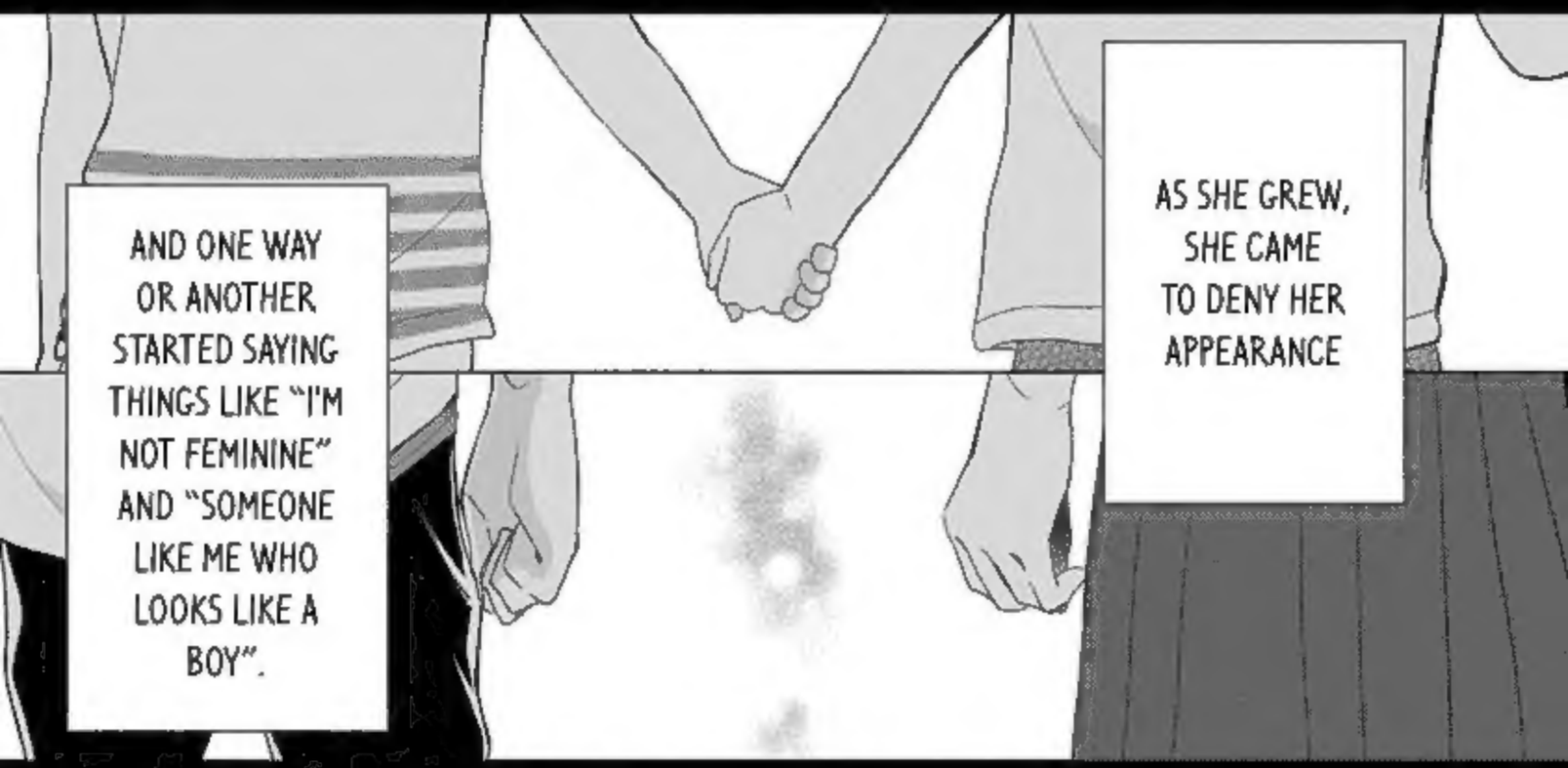

I DON'T REMEMBER WHEN EXACTLY I BECAME AWARE
THAT MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND, WHO HAS BEEN BY MY SIDE AS FAR AS I REMEMBER,
IS SOMEONE OF THE OPPOSITE SEX.


AS SHE GREW, SHE CAME TO DENY HER APPEARANCE
AND ONE WAY OR ANOTHER STARTED SAYING THINGS LIKE "I'M NOT FEMININE" AND "SOMEONE LIKE ME WHO LOOKS LIKE A BOY".

BUT

THAT DOESN'T MATTER TO ME AT ALL.
IT NEVER CHANGED THE FACT THAT AKIRA IS A PRECIOUS EXISTENCE TO ME.
IT NEVER CROSSED MY MIND TO YIELD THE SPACE BESIDE ME TO ANOTHER PERSON.
THAT'S WHY I BECAME IMPATIENT.
I BECAME IMPATIENT AND ACTED WITHOUT CONSIDERING AKIRA'S PERSO-NALITY. THE RESULT

FIRST, I'M SORRY!!
FOR THE PAST FEW DAYS, I WAS AVOIDING YOU OUTRIGHT.
IS THIS.
EH
YOU NEVER CONTACTED ME. EVEN WHEN I WENT IN FRONT OF YOUR ROOM TO CHECK UP ON YOU, YOU JUST IGNORED ME.
NO, I NORMALLY NOTICED THAT.
YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T NOTICE, THOUGH...
I'm not that slow.
WE HAVEN'T SEEN EACH OTHER IN DAYS. AT A GLANCE AKIRA SEEMS TO BE LIKE SHE USUALLY IS
I was probably sleeping so I didn't notice. Sorry!
I didn't know that!

EVEN IF I DON'T WANT TO, I NOTICE THE DISTANCE SHE'S KEEPING.
SHE DIDN'T SIT BESIDE ME JUST LIKE USUAL.
BUT

I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID THAT.

AND HER REASON FOR SUDDENLY COMING HERE
IS DEFINITELY NO GOOD NEWS FOR ME...
...I CAME HERE TODAY
TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS, MAKOTO.
ばっ

WHAT IS IT ABOUT ME DO YOU LIKE?
I WANTED TO ASK YOU ALL OF THOSE.
Y-YOU SAID YOU LIKE ME.
WELL... SINCE WHEN HAVE YOU LIKED ME?

...SE...

...SO I CONFESSED TO YOU. AND WITHOUT RECEIVING A REPLY, YOU AVOIDED ME FOR THE PAST FEW DAYS.
...Y-YEAH.
AND TODAY YOU SUDDENLY SAID YOU WANTED TO TALK.
I THOUGHT I'D GET AN ANSWER, SO I GOT MYSELF PREPARED AND WAS EVEN NERVOUS.

Seriously, youuu!
EH?
What?!

SORRY...
BUT I...

SIGH... I SEE.
WE'RE STARTING THERE, HUH...
Exhausted...

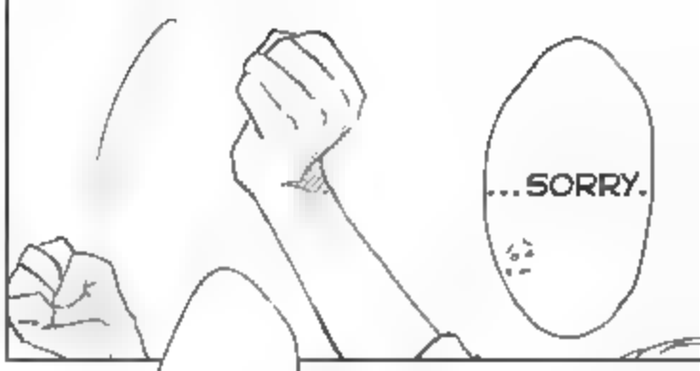
I NEED TO GIVE THIS A LOT OF THOUGHT AND GIVE YOU AN ANSWER.
TO BE HONEST, EVEN NOW I'M AT LOST AND CONFUSED.
BUT

But it's alright if you don't wanna answer...
T-That's why I figured I'd ask you everything I want to ask...
...WHAT ARE THEY AGAIN?
Yes?!
YOUR QUES-TIONS.
THESE ARE YOUR FEELINGS, AND NOT SOMEONE ELSE'S.
I THOUGHT I NEED TO FACE THIS PROPERLY.

AH!
U-UMM, SINCE WHEN...
I DON'T REMEM-BER.
BEFORE I KNEW IT, I ALREADY LIKE YOU. JUST AS MUCH AS I LIKE YOU NOW.
T-THEN, WHAT IS IT ABOUT ME...
YOU'RE CARE-FREE AND A GOOD PERSON.
NO MAT-TER WHO IT IS, YOU NEVER DENY THEM.
YOU BROAD-MINDEDLY ACCEPT EVERYONE AND EVERY-THING.
YOU'LL ALWAYS TELL ME "YOU'RE YOU, MAKOTO," NO MATTER HOW I AM.
BASICALLY, EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU.
ANY-THING ELSE?
.....
THAT'S ALL...
!!!
AKIRA ...
AREN'T YOU GONNA ASK IF I'M TELLING THE TRUTH?

.....? WELL,
I KNOW THE MOST
THAT YOU'D NEVER JOKE ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
AAAAA AAAAA AHHH
MA-MAKOTO ?!
Again all of a sudden!!
ばたーん
.....
TO BE HONEST,
IT WAS A BIT TIRE-SOME THAT YOU WERE AVOIDING ME.
I EVEN THOUGHT I SHOULDN'T HAVE TOLD YOU.

UP TO ME...


...SORRY.

STILL,
I DO LIKE WHO I LIKE.
Heave-ho

After our exams in January
LET'S SEE... FOR STARTERS, LET'S GO OUT SOMEWHERE.
EH? AH, OKAY...
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
That's sudden

WE WENT SHOPPING THE OTHER DAY...
I'LL PREPARE MYSELF FOR THE WORST.
SO NOW IT'S UP TO YOU.

...DON'T YOU GET IT? IT'LL BE DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE TIMES WE WENT OUT TOGETHER.
IT'S A DATE.

HUH...?
HAVE YOU FOR-GOTTEN?
THE DEAL WE MADE REGARDING NISH.KUBO'S MATTER.

Date
逢引
デート
Oh, I-I see. A d-da-date!!
W-Well, it'd be nice if that can wait until another time. Uh...
I WON'T WAIT.

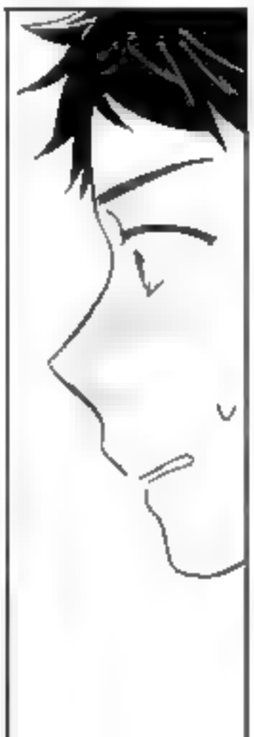
AH
YOU WILL LISTEN TO ONE REQUEST OF MINE.

T-That's all too sudden...
I TOLD YOU I'VE ALREADY PREPARED MYSELF FOR THE WORST.
ALL THAT'S LEFT IS FOR ME TO PUSH.
IT'S UP TO YOU WHAT YOU'LL DO.
I CAN'T WAIT.

Hmmm
ごちゃっ・・

Also
these ones
Boyish clothes
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT TO WEAR...
MAKOTO EMPHASIZED ABOUT THE DATE.

Hmm
WHAT TO DO ...



I'LL GO WITH WHAT I NORMALLY WEAR. LET'S DO THAT!
AH, WHATEVER!
ぽいっ

カリカリ
AKIRA~ ARE YOU FREE RIGHT NOW?
.....
GOOD EVENING~
ピンポーン
CAN YOU TAKE A GIFT TO SHARE WITH THE NINO-MIYAS?
I made too much side dishes~
WHAT IS IT?
AUNTIE!!
How rare!
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME!!!
MY, OH MY, OH MY~!
OH MY!!

EVEN WITH THOSE SPARKLING EYES, AKIRA-CHAN WON'T LET YOU DRESS HER UP DO HER MAKEUP.
How many times do you think I've taken up the challenge and failed?
Auntie is excited!
YOU'VE GROWN AGAIN SINCE THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU!
YOU'VE BECOME COOLER, HAVEN'T YOU?
Oh my!

SINCE YOU PLAYED VOLLEYBALL, YOU HAVE A GOOD PERSON AND A FIRM BUTT.
YOU HAVE SUCH A SHAPELY NOSE. ANY MAKE UP WILL LOOK GOOD ON YOU WITH THOSE FEATURES. AND YOU HAVE A CLEAR SKIN.
I HAVE TONS OF CLOTHES THAT I WANT YOU TO WEAR, YOU KNOW~!
.....

WHAT A WASTE... EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE THE BEST FEATURES ...
OH, IS THAT SO...
Oh dear
Haha..

.....H-
HEY...

WELL...
W-WHAT KIND OF ATTIRE FOR A DATE WOULD MAKE A BOY...
...HAPPY?
I'M HOME.
I BOUGHT SPRING ONION AND PERILLA...
OH, WELCOME HOME.
...WHAT'S WITH THAT MOUNTAIN OF CLOTHES... I'M NOT GONNA CROSS-DRESS FOR A WHILE, OKAY?
Phew
ごーちゃ～～

I did a good job~
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WE'RE DONE HERE.
~♪
HUH?
DID YOU MISS HER OUTSIDE?
YOU NEED TO GET USED TO THIS KIND OF THING.
WE MADE HER GO TO THE CONVENIENCE STORE FOR AN ERRAND SO SHE'LL GET USED TO OTHER PEOPLE'S GAZE.
I'M SATISFIED~
...WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
AKIRA-CHAN FINALLY LET US DO HER MAKE UP~
SHE SAID SHE WANTS TO MAKE HER DATE HAPPY!!

SHE SAID IT'S FOR A DATE <3 DID YOU KNOW ABOUT IT?
WHAT'S WRONG?
MY
Where are you going?
IT'S ALREADY LATE!!
DON'T MAKE HER GO ALL BY HERSELF !!!
ガタガタ
バタン!!
My
Oh

MY, MY. WHAT IS HE FRANTIC ABOUT?
Mom
EVEN THOUGH HE'S NEVER WORRIED ABOUT US EVEN ONCE.
Sis